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경영학 석사학위논문

The Effect of Perceived Autonomy on Young Chinese Customers' Perception of Coolness

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서울대학교 대학원

경영학과 마케팅 전공

AIZIZI • NUERBIYA

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Abstract

The Effect of Perceived Autonomy on Young Chinese Customers' Perception of Coolness

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Customers value coolness and to attract those target customers, marketing practitioners are trying to build a cool image for their brand and products through various channels. Despite lots of work have been conducted on coolness, little has been done on clarifying what makes things cool and its underlying mechanism. Warren & Campbell(2014) first explored the empirical relationship between autonomy and perceived coolness in Western culture and demonstrated that autonomy is a significant predictor of customers' perceived coolness. To investigating whether the relationship between autonomy and perceived coolness will still be effective in Eastern culture, which is one of the main concerns of

Warren & Campbell's research, this current research first replicated the work of Warren & Campbell on young Chinese customers. More importantly, this research has conducted two experiments to reveal the mediating role of admiration and moderating role of individual's risk-taking attitude during the effect of autonomy on customers' perceived coolness.

Autonomy of a fictitious brand (Study 1) and a theoretical person (Study 2) were manipulated. Both two studies first tested the prediction of higher autonomy leads to greater perceived coolness and the prediction was supported in both studies. The results also demonstrated the mediating role of admiration (Study 1,2) and moderating role of individual's risk-taking attitude (Study 2). Notably, differed from expectation, individual's risk-taking attitude showed a significant moderating effect only when manipulating the autonomy level of a theoretical person (Study 2) but not a fictitious brand (Study 1). This converse result was discussed in general discussion part.

The current research significantly contributes to the extant literature on coolness by replicating the finding that autonomy leads to perceived coolness in Chinese customers, those who are affected by Eastern culture. Moreover this study further propose a research model to explain the effect of autonomy on coolness, which suggests some implication for marketers and researchers. Limitations and future research ideas are also discussed at the last part.

Keyword: Perceived Coolness; Autonomy; Admiration; Risk-taking Attitude;
Young Chinese Customers

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Coolness is not a new concept. Researchers from diverse disciplines have discovered the concept of coolness (Connor, 1995; Danesi, 1994; Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012; Frank, 1998; Majors, 1992; Nancarrow, Nancarrow, & Page, 2002; Pountain & Robins, 2000). In business area, coolness has started to being adopted by marketing practitioners since middle of 1990s(Fuller, 1998; Mohiuddin, Gordon, Magee, Lee, & Zainuddin, 2016) and has been generally used in advertisements, various cultural contents and web sites. A simple search in Amazon.com, for instance, alone produced over 300 titles of published books which have the word cool as part of their titles, primarily with its slang meaning(Rahman & Cherrier, 2010). Consumers use the word cool to express their approval and appreciation to various products(Sundar, Tamul, & Wu, 2014) and the word “cool” no longer connotes the strength of meaning as it once did(Sundar et al., 2014). Now may no one doubts the fact that customers value coolness and they always desire for coolness.Holtzblatt (2011) had proposed that cool products bring joy to our lives and contribute to our personal feelings of accomplishment, connection with others, identity and delightful experience. So it may not surprising to find Apple, who tops Britain's No. 1 coolest brand for three years successively since 2013 (CoolBrands, 2015), has been vaulted as “the best global brand” for recent three years (Interbrand, 2015)

In marketing literature, coolness has become discussed since early

2000s(Nancarrow et al., 2002; Olson, Czaplewski, & Slater, 2005). The term coolness has become increasingly important over the recent years. Rahman and Cherrier (2010) examined correlated variables such as humor, need for uniqueness, materialism and et al, which had demonstrated to be positively related to cool identity; Sundar et al. (2014) had pointed out coolness as an essential psychological criterion for designers and developers when creating new systems, applications, interface or devices; Bruun, Raptis, Kjeldskov, and Skov (2016) had established a questionnaire to measuring internal cool of interactive products, which consist of three factors: Desirability, rebelliousness and usability. But as Mohiuddin et al. (2016) presented in World Social Marketing Conference 2015, understanding of coolness has remained elusive(Gurrieri, 2009; Rahman, 2013) and empirical studies on coolness in the marketing discipline are only recently emerging (Rahman, 2013; Sundar et al., 2014; Warren & Campbell, 2014).

To explore what makes things cool will have both theoretical and managerial attribution since it has puzzled academics and marketers alike. Warren and Campbell (2014) first tried to reveal what, in addition to being desirable, makes things cool. They used an experimental approach to examine the empirical relationship between consumers' inference of autonomy and perceived coolness. The findings showed that behaviors expressing autonomy increase perceived coolness, but only when the autonomy seems appropriate. They took the first step to understand what affects customers' perceived coolness and highlighted the role of autonomy. But the researchers had not explained why customers considered a subject to be cooler when the subject showing greater autonomy. So in current

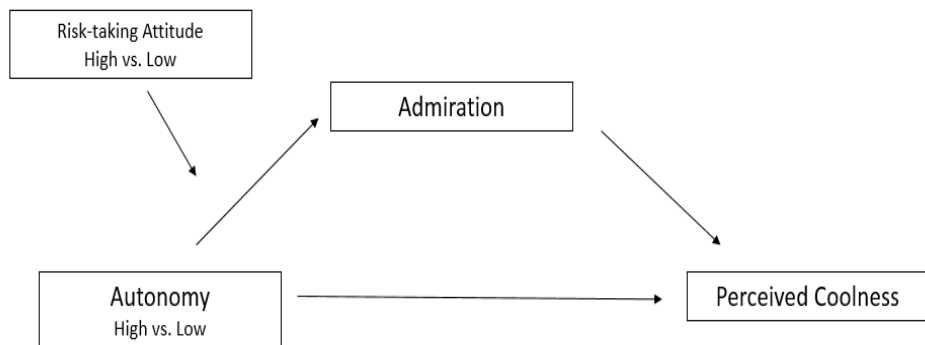
research, to better understand this casual effect, the mediating role of customers' admiration to the subject in autonomy-coolness relationship will be explored and the moderating effect of customers' risk-taking attitude will be investigated. What's more, as Asia has a large population and hung market potential, it becomes the fastest-growing and most vibrant region in the global economy. So it is very necessary to explore the robust of the autonomy-coolness relationship in the Eastern world. Warren and Campbell (2014) also mentioned that Western and Eastern customers may show different result according to their cultural differences. Based on Hofstede and Hofstede (2001)'s cultural dimensions, Chinese culture is more socially collectivist in nature, whereas Americans are considered to have an individualist culture. In this research, two experiments will be conducted with young Chinese customers, those who are from collectivistic culture but are imbued with cool value as the globalization to shed light on the generalizability of the autonomy-coolness relationship.

1.2 Research Objectives

This current research is conducted for three objectives. Firstly, by replicating the research of Warren and Campbell (2014) to investigate whether the relationship of autonomy and perceived coolness, which has been found in Western consumers, still robust when sampling from the young Chinese customers, those who are from collectivistic cultures. Secondly, current research is attempting to reveal the underlying mechanism of why autonomy can influence customers' perceived

coolness by highlighting the mediating effect of admiration. Thirdly, this study proposes one boundary condition to this causal effect by introducing risk-taking attitude of the customers into the conceptual model. The overall framework for this research is presented in Fig.1.

Figure 1: Research Model



1.3 Research Question

On the basis of the above discussions, the following three research questions are proposed. Question 1: Can autonomy still influence perceived coolness even when sampling from young Chinese customers, those who are from collectivistic cultures? Question 2: What is the mechanism beneath the casual relationship between autonomy and customers' perceived coolness? Question 3: How customers' risk-taking attitude affects the relationship between autonomy and their perceived coolness?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Autonomy – Coolness Relationship

2.1.1 Explicating What Is Cool

Before investigating what makes things cool, a deeper understanding of coolness is needed. Cool had its roots in black culture, especially that of urban North America (Belk, 2006; Moore, 2004) and entered the mainstream as a strategy to increase hedonistic consumption along with becoming the language of advertising (Nancarrow et al., 2002).

Although coolness aroused the scholars' continuing interest in marketing field, when it comes to what is cool, there is still no a specific and clear definition (Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012; Warren & Campbell, 2014). Lots of literature have mentioned that the meaning of cool has evolved and no longer connoted what it once did (Rahman & Cherrier, 2010; Sundar et al., 2014; Warren & Campbell, 2014). The definition of coolness in literatures is various to the perspectives they use to approach coolness. As the most comprehensive account of contemporary coolness in marketing literature, Nancarrow et al. (2002) defined it partly as an attitude—laid-back, narcissistic, hedonistic—but also as a form of cultural capital that increasingly consists of insider knowledge about commodities and consumption practices as yet unavailable to the mainstream (Nancarrow et al., 2002); As another definition that much used reference, Belk (2006) described cool as “refers to a person who is admired because she, or more often he, exhibits a nonchalant control of emotions, a rebellious trickster demeanor, an ironic detachment from the regard

of others, and a “cool” style of talking, walking, gesturing and grooming” (Belk, 2006; Rahman & Cherrier, 2010). In this current research, the definition of Warren and Campbell (2014) in their empirical study on how autonomy influence perceived coolness will be adopted. They proposed that coolness is a subjective and dynamic, socially constructed positive trait attributed to cultural objects (people, brands, products, trends, etc.) inferred to be appropriately autonomous. This conceptualization will be tested with young Chinese customers in the next section.

Mohiuddin et al. (2016) pointed out that cool still is an evasive and blurred concept in marketing. Still and all, there are some core principles of coolness with common agreement. First, coolness can be divided into inner cool and outer cool (Bruun et al., 2016; MacAdams, 2001; Nancarrow et al., 2002). Inner cool refers to someone’s or something’s personality or character, whereas outer cool is about how something presents itself through a certain style in physical appearance (Bruun et al., 2016). Specifically, inner cool is about cultural objects’ personality or personality trait (Janlert & Stolterman, 1997; Jordan, 1997) and outer cool, according to Gioia (2009) is about a person’s clothes, accessories, language and pose or aesthetic qualities of the product design. In this paper, perceived coolness is a whole concept since it is hard to investigate only inner or outer cool separately since they are closely correlated. A subject’s inner cool is expressed through its cool style and in turn, their outer cool can help customers’ to inference the subject’s cool personality and enhancing inner cool.

Second, perceptions of coolness are contextual. Coolness itself is intrinsically judgmental (Nancarrow et al., 2002) and people can recognize cool or uncool at the

moment they observe it (Bruun et al., 2016; Frank, 1998). In other word, we don't have to think about a lot to make the judgment on whether an object or a person is cool or uncool. We know it immediately and to achieve this immediate judgement, customers only use the qualities they consider as relevant to the specific context instead of considering and rating all qualities of the subject (Bruun et al., 2016; Kruglanski & Gigerenzer, 2011; Warren & Campbell, 2014). This indicated that there is a mutable variable than can be affected by environment and various with customers can play a moderating role during customers' judgment process on cool. In this paper, it is customers' risk-taking attitude, which will be discussed more in the following part of this paper.

Third, as Warren and Campbell (2014) stressed, coolness is socially constructed. Coolness is a perception or an attribution bestowed by an audience (Belk, Tian, & Paavola, 2010; Gurrieri, 2009; Warren & Campbell, 2014). Gerber and Geiman (2012)'s findings in their paper proposed that what one person thinks is cool is at least in part based on what other people think is cool. This finding also supports the nature of cool as a social constructed traits, like popularity or status (Hollander, 1958; Warren & Campbell, 2014). This common agreement on coolness will be used when explaining the mediating role of admiration, which can be seen as an emotion that belonging to social emotion category.

2.1.2 Influence of Autonomy on Perceived Coolness

As mentioned above, "cool" now is generally conceptualized as a positive desirable

attribute (Sundar et al., 2014) and customers even sometimes use the word “cool” as a synonym for “I like it”(Belk et al., 2010).Pountain and Robins (2000) also emphasized that cool was not merely another way of saying good and it came with baggage. So, what is the exact one that leads to customers’ perceived coolness?

Though prior works in academic have proposed lots of possible factors like not conforming(Frank, 1998; Joseph & Andrew, 2004), an unwillingness to follow trends(Connor, 1995), Humor, need for uniqueness, Materialism(Rahman & Cherrier, 2010) and potential antecedents sexual permissiveness, hedonism and detachment (Bird & Tapp, 2008; Connor, 1995; Leland, 2009), it’s not known, with the paucity of empirical research and strong causal data, exactly what makes things cool. Some studies were trying to explicate cool-related factors by providing a large list of “characteristics” which made it more difficulty to conduct further empirical research since the number of “characteristics” were overwhelming (Bruun et al., 2016; Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012; Mohiuddin et al., 2016). Table 1 presents the cool-related contents by prior works.

Table 1: Cool-related Contents

Content	Source	Content	Source
Youthfulness	Martino (2000)	Creative	Bird and Tapp (2008); Rahman (2013)
Sexual appetite	Strodtbeck, Short, and Kolegar	Aesthetic	Southgate (2003);

	(1962)		Nancarrow et al. (2002)
Risk taking	Martin and Leary (2001)	Flexibility and tolerance	Nancarrow et al. (2002); Rahman (2013)
Toughness	Aloise-Young and Hennigan (1996); Denborough (1996);Rodkin, Farmer, Pearl, and Van Acker (2000)	Moving on	Bird and Tapp (2008); Rahman (2013)
Masculinity	Czopp, Lasane, Sweigard, Bradshaw, and Hammer (1998); Denborough (1996);Martino (2000)	Against racial prejudice	Bird and Tapp (2008)
Muted emotion	Beckerleg (2004); Erber, Wegner, and Therriault (1996)	individualism	Frank (1998);Pountain and Robins (2000);Hebdige and Potter (2008)
Rebelliousness	Eggertsen (1965)	Multi-cultural perspective	Southgate (2003); Warren and Campbell (2014)
Rejection of effortful	Czopp et al. (1998); Osborne	Innovative	Gurrieri (2009); Warren and Campbell

striving	(1999); Williams, Burden, and Lanvers (2002)		(2014)
Clear expressions	Southgate (2003)	Autonomy	Bird and Tapp (2008); Warren and Campbell (2014)
Self- expressions	Bird and Tapp (2008);Southgate (2003);Frank (1998)	Moving on	Bird and Tapp (2008); Rahman (2013)

Autonomy, refers to a willingness to pursue one's own course irrespective of the norms, beliefs, and expectations of others(Warren & Campbell, 2014). Past literatures has showed some relationship between autonomy and coolness, but the results diverse. Some research pointed out that coolness comes from factors associated with low autonomy (Danesi, 1994; Gladwell, 1997), whereas some suggested that variables associated with high autonomy could lead to coolness(Joseph & Andrew, 2004; MacAdams, 2001; Pountain & Robins, 2000). There is still no clear understanding about the influence of autonomy on customers' perceived coolness. Warren and Campbell (2014) first try to reveal autonomy, in addition to being desirable, makes things cool in an experimental approach. In their study, Warren and Campbell (2014) verified the casual relationship between autonomy and customers' perceived coolness, as well as the factors that may affect this relationship. The authors concluded that bands as well as objects that diverge

from the norm, which have increased autonomy, in a way that seems appropriate are perceived as cool. But since they conducted their experiments exclusively in Western consumers, those who tend to be individualistic and hold a model of agency that suggests it is better to control the environment than to try to adjust to fit within it (Warren & Campbell, 2014). To generalize the autonomy-coolness relationship, another study that being conducted with customers from collectivistic cultures, in which people are more likely to believe that it is better to adjust one's self to fit within the environment than to try to control it is needed (Markus & Schwartz, 2010; Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002; Warren & Campbell, 2014).

With the rapid development of Chinese economy recently, Chinese customers have become the major target for many international companies. Young Chinese consumers, those who are entering their 30s, are rapidly becoming China's mainstream consumer group. So in this study, the relationship between autonomy and perceived coolness will be tested with young Chinese customers. Based on the prior work, young Chinese customers still have a great chance to show higher level of perceived coolness to objects that supposed to be more autonomy than with lower autonomy.

H1: Object with greater perception of autonomy can lead to a higher perceived coolness than object with lower autonomy.

2.2 Mediating Role of Admiration

Previous research has shown some relationship between autonomy and coolness, especially, Warren and Campbell (2014)'s empirical study further demonstrated this relationship. But there is still no any research, to the best of the author's knowledge, has investigated the underlying mechanism of why autonomy can lead to customers' perceived coolness. To fill the gap, this current research proposes admiration, a respond to the goodness seen in some stimulus event, mediates the effect of autonomy on customers' perceived coolness.

Admiration have been included in emotion families called appreciation emotions(Ortony, Clore, & Collins, 1990; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), liking emotions(Ortony et al., 1990), or other-praising emotions (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Haidt, 2003; Stets, 2006). Darwin, Ekman, and Prodger (1998) described admiration as surprise associated with some pleasure and a sense of approval. Algoe and Haidt (2009) compared three other-praising emotions: elevation, gratitude and admiration, which can be elicited when witnessing excellence in action and noted that admiration can be seen as an emotion that do people feel when they see extraordinary displays of skill, talent and achievement and it is the emotional response to non-moral excellence(Algoe & Haidt, 2009). As mentioned above,Belk (2006) described cool as “refers to a person who is admired because she, or more often he, exhibits a nonchalant control of emotions, a rebellious trickster demeanor, an ironic detachment from the regard of others, and a “cool” style of talking, walking, gesturing and grooming”(Rahman & Cherrier, 2010) and Sundar et al. (2014) noted that cool has become a common expression of approval

and appreciation. So it is quite reasonable to assume that customer's perceived coolness is resulting from their admiration to the subject.

According to prior work, autonomous is pervasive and generally greatly admired (Bellezza, Gino, & Keinan, 2014; Dworkin, 1988; Markus & Schwartz, 2010) and on the contrast, being easily influence by others is not an admired personal trait (Jetten, Hornsey, & Adarves-Yorno, 2006). When customers inferring autonomy from a cultural subject, including brands and people, admiration can be elicited. Therefore, when customers encounter with the culture subjects, to what extent do the customer has inferred autonomy can affect whether or not, or how likely they would admire the focal subject. And as a result, their admiration level can result in varying degrees of perceived coolness. In other word, the author expects that customers' autonomy can increase their admiration to the subject, thus increasing their perceived coolness.

H2: As an underlying mechanism, admiration to the object mediates the effect of autonomy on customers' perceived coolness.

H2a: participants will have a greater admiration to the object with high (vs. low) autonomy.

H2b: participants will have higher perceived coolness to the object with greater (vs. lower) admiration.

2.3 Moderating Role of Risk-Taking Attitude

Risk-taking attitude can be understood as people's likelihood of involvement in risky behavior (Cheung, Wu, & Tao, 2013; Weber, Blais, & Betz, 2002) or the willingness to engage in risky behavior (Blais & Weber, 2006). Prior study has demonstrated that deviating from the norm signals that one has the autonomy needed to act according to one's own inclinations and to bear the cost of nonconformity (Bellezza et al., 2014). Autonomy always comes at a price and people know it. But whether the price worth paying is various to individual. Literature indicates that customers' various attitudes related to financial, health/safety, recreational, ethics and social risk-taking can affect their evaluation on others risk-taking behavior (Cheung et al., 2013; Figner & Weber, 2011; Hanoch, Johnson, & Wilke, 2006).

Risk-taking studies have shown that people from Eastern and Western cultures are basically different (Bellezza et al., 2014; Hsee & Weber, 1999; Weber & Hsee, 1998). Customers from Eastern or Western culture may evaluate differently to the cultural subject that signaling autonomy, and eventually, they may various in their perceived coolness to the focal subject. Taking resisting group pressure as an example. In the Western cultures that place highly value on individualism and independence, resisting group pressure can be perceived as a brave and bold gesture (Baumeister, 1982; Bellezza et al., 2014; Galinsky, Magee, Gruenfeld, Whitson, & Liljenquist, 2008). But, in contrast, in the Eastern cultures, people believe that it would be better to adjust one's self to fit within the environment than try to control it (Markus & Schwartz, 2010; Oyserman et al., 2002), resisting group

pressure may be seen as a behavior that stubborn and unsocial instead of brave and bold gesture. As a result, whether or not the individual thinks the autonomous signaled by resisting group pressure is cool, depending on their individual risk-taking attitude.

As noted, perceptions of coolness are continuous and contextual. According to Deck, Lee, Reyes, and Rosen (2008), people are not consistently risk-averse or risk-seeking across all domains(Deck et al., 2008). In other word, individual's risk-taking attitude changes due to the change of environment. Hanoch et al. (2006) also finds that individuals who engaged in a high level of risky behavior in one domain also did so in other risky domains(Hanoch et al., 2006). This can explain why customers' perceived coolness to the same subject can be continuous and contextual. For example, individual admires people who enjoying bungee jump and perceived it to be cool has greater chance to think so to other extreme sports. On the contrary, even an individual admires bungee jump, they may not admires someone who jumped from somewhere with inadequate safety features accounting for the change of their risk-taking attitude in this specific situation.

In sum, the author hypothesizes that customers' admiration to the focal autonomous subject moderated by their risk-taking attitude, and ultimately affects the autonomy-coolness relationship.

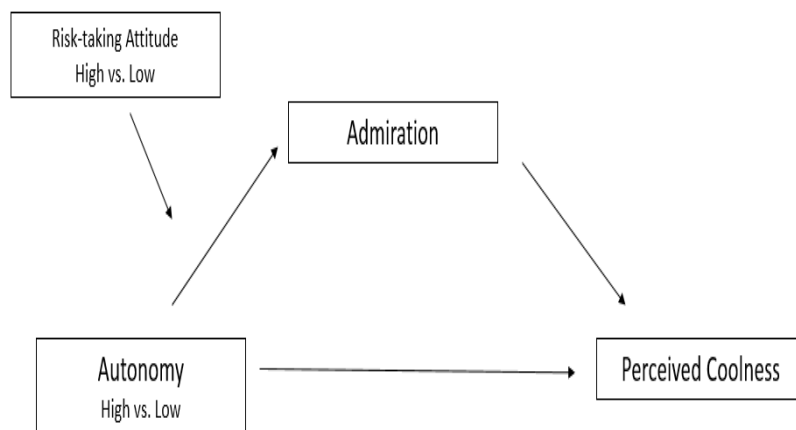
H3: Customers' risk-taking attitude positively moderates the relationship between autonomy and admiration. Customers with greater risk-taking attitude have a greater chance to admire the object that shows autonomy than customers with

lower risk-taking attitude.

2.4 Summary of Hypotheses

In sum, the conceptual framework and overall hypotheses are shown as followed:

Figure 2 : Research Model



H1: Object with greater perception of autonomy can lead to a higher perceived coolness than object with lower autonomy.

H2: As an underlying mechanism, admiration to the object mediates the effect of autonomy on customers' perceived coolness.

H2a: participants will have a greater admiration to the object with high (vs. low) autonomy.

H2b: participants will have higher perceived coolness to the object with greater (vs. lower) admiration.

H3: Customers' risk-taking attitude positively moderates the relationship between autonomy and admiration. Customers with greater risk-taking attitude have a greater chance to admire the object that shows autonomy than customers with lower risk-taking attitude.

3. Experiments

Two studies are conducted to test the influence of autonomy on perceived coolness and its underlying mechanism. Study 1 examines whether the effect of autonomy on perceived coolness also robust to young Chinese customers and tests the mediating effect of admiration as proposed. Participants will exposure to a fictitious sunglasses brand descriptions eliciting high or low inferred autonomy and by doing so, the main effect of autonomy on participants' perceived coolness to the brand will be investigated. Study 2 manipulates the autonomy level of a hypothetical person rather than a brand to generalize the findings of study 1. In both studies, participants' risk-taking attitude is measured in the purpose of further explore the interaction effect of autonomy and participants' risk-taking attitude. All the studies are facilitated by online survey, and the sampling is subject to the problems of snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is recognized as a commonly used technique for both qualitative and quantitative research(Frankwick, Ward, Hutt, & Reingen, 1994; He & Li, 2011). Considering the resource constraint, the

snowball sampling is thought to be optimal. All the survey will be released on the Sojump.com, which is the most popular online survey platform in China. Questionnaires were distributed from May 16th to May 18th, 2016 mainly through online channel-- Wechat, which is the most widely used messaging app in China.

3.1 Study 1: Manipulating Autonomy of a Fictitious Brand

There are two primary objectives of study 1. First, this experiment investigates whether participants' perceived coolness to a focal brand increases as autonomy increased. I manipulated the inferred brand autonomy through a brand introduction scenario which was adopted from Warren and Campbell (2014). Specifically, participants were shown an introduction to the focal brand that suggesting whether high autonomy or low autonomy. I expected that participants will perceive the brand with high autonomy to be cooler than the brand with low autonomy. Second, this experiment seeks the underlying mechanism and relative individual trait for the impact of autonomy on customers' perceived coolness by testing mediating role of participants' admiration to the subject and moderating role of their risk-taking attitude. In this study, all the variables but autonomy, are measured and the risk-taking attitude of participants, in the same way, is measured rather than manipulated.

3.1.1 Participants and Procedure

A sample of 160 young Chinese customers participated in this study through

Wechat, most widely used messaging app in China. Among them, 59% are female and 95% are 20-34 age range. The experiment is a 2 (autonomy: high versus low) × 2 (risk-taking attitude: high versus low) between-subjects design. Participants are randomly allocated to one of the two autonomy conditions in which they read description of a fictitious brand: Reo sunglasses. I choose sunglasses brand because prior work has demonstrated that sunglasses are linked to the cool identity schema (Dalton, 2014) and Warren and Campbell (2014) also used it when investigating the effect of autonomy on perceived coolness. I manipulated autonomy from low to high levels in the same way with Warren and Campbell (2014), by indicating whether the brand “follow the market,” “usually conforms to popular styles,” “defies industry standards,” and is “rebellious and controversial”(Warren & Campbell, 2014).

Participants in the low autonomy condition read:

“Reo follows the market to design sunglasses that fit mainstream tastes. There is nothing atypical or controversial about Reo products. Reo is concerned with gaining the approval of mainstream consumers and tries hard to follow the norm so it will be liked and accepted.”

Participants in the high autonomy condition read:

“Reo is a rebellious and controversial brand. Their products are radically different than other brands. Reo shows contempt for rules and a complete disregard for marketplace opinion. Reo and its employees do what they want whether or not it pleases others.”

The wording of both instructions were the Chinese version of the scenarios had been used in the article of Warren and Campbell (2014). Scenarios and the autonomy scale, which had first developed by Warren and Campbell (2014) were translated into simplified Chinese by a mainland student studied in English Translation and Interpretation major who proficient in both languages. The translated Chinese version of the scenario and scale were translated into English by an independent translator who now studies in America. The original English version and the back-translated English version were then compared to safeguard against any shift in item meaning during the translation process. This kind of process adopted from prior cross-culture research(Cheung et al., 2013).

After reading the description to the brand accordingly, I assessed the effect of being exposed to the focal brand showing different autonomy on participants' perceived coolness. Participants then read, "Brands are often seen as possessing human characteristics and personalities. Next, we are going to ask you a few questions about the personality of Reo." Participants' inferred autonomy, admiration to the brand's characteristics and personalities were measured. Finally, participants' risk perception to autonomous of the brand and their individual risk-taking attitude in the domain of finance, recreational, and social were measured. I measured participants' risk perception to autonomous of the brand to better explain the findings of this research. As noted, prior study has demonstrated that deviating from the norm signals that one has the autonomy needed to act according to one's own inclinations and to bear the cost of nonconformity(Bellezza et al., 2014). Autonomy always comes at a price and people know it. To support this,

participants' risk perception to the autonomous of the brand is measured additively.

3.1.2 Measure

Manipulation checks. I checked the effectiveness of manipulation by measuring the level of inferred autonomy after the participants read the description to the focal brand. I used Chinese version six items derived from Warren and Campbell (2014). Participants were asked to rate on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) the extent to which they agree with following statements: “Reo lives how it wants to live whether or not it pleases others,” “Reo doesn’t do things just to fit in,” “Reo pays little attention to established social norms or conventions,” “Reo rarely caves into social pressure,” “Reo doesn’t change who it is to suit others,” and “Reo breaks rules when it feels like it.”

Perceived coolness. Participants’ perceived coolness to the focal brand was assessed by asking the participant “Is this brand cool?” and “Is this brand hip?” Both are 7-point measures (1=not cool/ not hip, 7=cool/hip). These two items were derived from Warren and Campbell (2014) and translated into simplified Chinese in advanced.

Admiration. I measured participants’ admiration towards the characteristics and personalities showed by the brand by asking participants to what extent they felt: “admiration,” “respect,” “reverence,” “awe,” and “inspiration” when thinking about the brand. These items were derived from Algoe and Haidt (2009), which

had also adopted by Sweetman, Spears, Livingstone, and Manstead (2013) in their study. The scale was anchored from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much).

Risk-taking attitude. As mentioned, risk-taking attitude measures individuals' likelihood of engaging in risky behavior (Cheung et al., 2013). In this study, participants' risk-taking attitude was assessed by a Chinese version of the 30-item domain-specific risk-taking (DOSPERT) scale (Weber et al., 2002). Individual's risk taking attitude in five distinguishable risk domains can be measured by DOSPERT scale, namely "finance" "health/safety," "recreational," "ethics," and "social". I removed the items related to "health/safety" and "ethics" domains since they are uncorrelated in this experiment. The Chinese version of DOSPERT scale was downloaded from the online open source of Columbia Business School. Eventually, the scale used in this study includes 15 items. Participants were asked to indicate their likelihood of engaging in each activity or behavior (e.g., "Admitting that your tastes are different from those of your friends," "Going whitewater rafting during rapid water flows in the spring"; 1=extremely unlikely, 7=extremely likely). To form a composite measure of participants' risk-taking attitude construct, I averaged the items. All participants divided into high or low risk-taking attitude conditions according to whether their scores are higher or lower than the mean. The specific measure items are attached in the appendix.

Risk perception to the autonomy. After measured participants' perceived coolness and admiration, they will read "People often see some risk in situations that contain uncertainty about what the outcome or consequences will be and for which there is the possibility of negative consequences. However, riskiness is a very personal and

intuitive notion, and we are interested in your gut level assessment of how risky Reo is in the market since it follows the market and usually conforms to popular style (low autonomy conditions)/ defines industry standards and be rebellious and controversial (high autonomy condition). ” Then they were asked to rate on a single item scale anchored from 1 (not at all risky) to 7 (extremely risky).

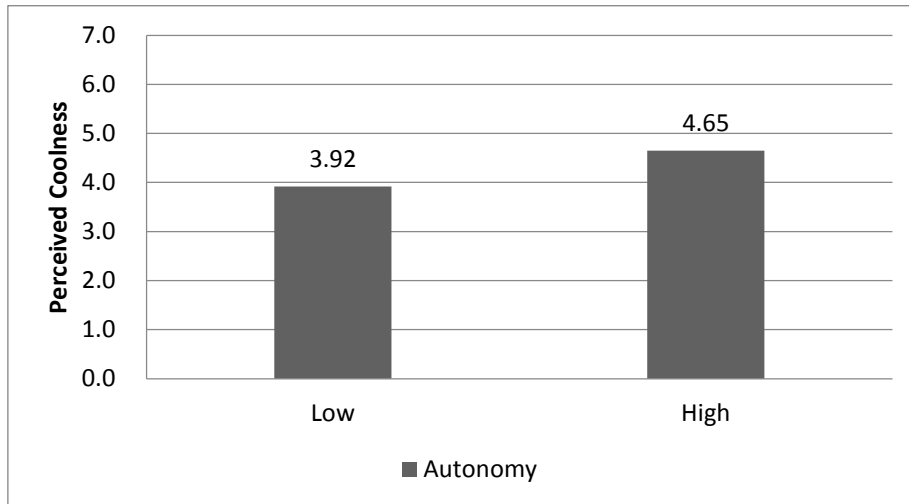
3.1.3 Result

Manipulation check. To confirm that manipulation of autonomy was successful, I averaged participants’ ratings of 6 items that measuring autonomy of the focal brand before submitting the resulting score to a one-way ANOVA. As expected, participants in the high autonomy condition ($M_{high}=5.18$) showed greater autonomy than those who were in low autonomy condition ($M_{low}=3.90$; $F(1,158)=35.46$; $p<.001$). These results suggest that manipulation of autonomy was successful.

Perceived coolness. To explore the effect of autonomy on participants perceived coolness, I averaged participants’ ratings of how “cool” and “hip” they felt the focal brand is before submitting the resulting score to an ANOVA. With the perceived coolness as depend variable and autonomy condition as fixed factor, ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of autonomy on perceived coolness($F(1,158)=11.31$, $p<0.01$). That is, consist with H1, the high autonomy description condition, in which the focal brand has a high brand autonomy, showed a significantly higher perceived coolness ($M_{high}=4.65$) than the low autonomy description condition, in which the focal brand has a low brand autonomy

($M_{low}=3.92$). The result is presented in Fig 3.

Figure 3: Influence of Autonomy on Perceived Coolness



Mediation analysis: Admiration. One of the main purpose of this study was to test whether high autonomy can lead to greater perceived coolness because of the individuals' admiration to the autonomy. To test this triangular chain of events, I followed Baron and Kenny (1986)'s four-step approach to mediation. Accordingly, I first regressed participants' perceived coolness on autonomy. Consist with the ANOVA reported earlier, this analysis suggests that autonomy is a significant predictor of individuals' perceived coolness to the focal brand ($\beta=.54$; $t(158)=8.84$; $p<0.001$). Second, I regressed the admiration on autonomy ($\beta=.60$; $t(158)=12.24$; $p<0.001$), which confirmed that higher autonomy lead to greater admiration to the personality of the brand. Third, I regressed participants' perceived coolness on admiration ($\beta=.68$; $t(158)=9.84$; $p < 0.001$), which revealed a positive and

significant relationship between admiration and perceived coolness. Fourth and last, I regressed participants' perceived coolness on autonomy and admiration. Though both of admiration and autonomy remained significant (admiration: $\beta=.46$; $t(157)=4.95$; $p<0.001$; autonomy: $\beta=.27$; $t(157)=3.33$; $p<0.005$), the beta weight for autonomy decreased from 0.54 to 0.27. The results showed that admiration partially mediated the effect of autonomy on perceived coolness (see fig. 4). Therefore, H2 was supported.

To confirm mediation effect, a bootstrapping analysis was conducted. Bootstrapping technique allows estimation of the sampling distribution of almost any statistic using very simple methods (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). According to Preacher and Hayes (2004), 5000 iterations was used to derive a 95% confidence interval around the indirect effect where mediation is said to occur if zero falls outside that confidence interval. A bootstrapping analysis generated a sample size of 5000 was then conducted using SPSS PROCESS MODEL 4 (Hayes, 2012; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The results showed that 95% confidence interval (CI) for the direct effect was not significant and included zero [$\beta=0.32$, 95% CI (-0.03, 0.68)] and the CI for the indirect effect was significant and excluded zero [$\beta=0.41$, 95% CI (0.18, 0.70)], which proved that the admiration could function as a mediator to the effect of autonomy on perceived coolness at the 95% significance level (see fig. 5).

Figure 4: Mediation analysis based on Baron and Kenny (1986)'s Method

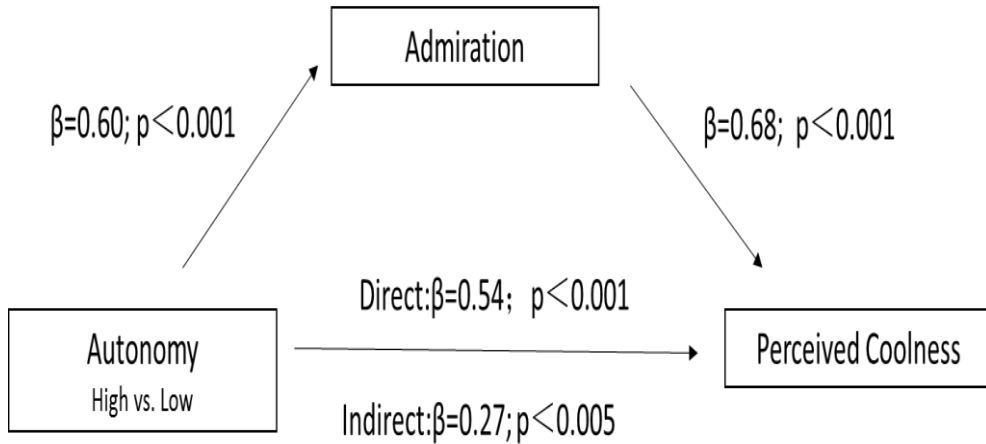
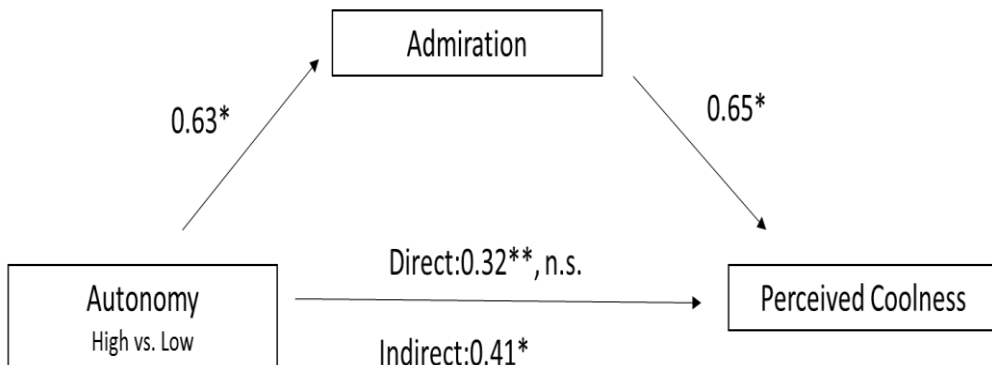


Figure 5: Mediation Analysis Based on Hayes (2012)'s Method



Note. * significant at the 0.05 level, ** none significant at the 0.05 level;

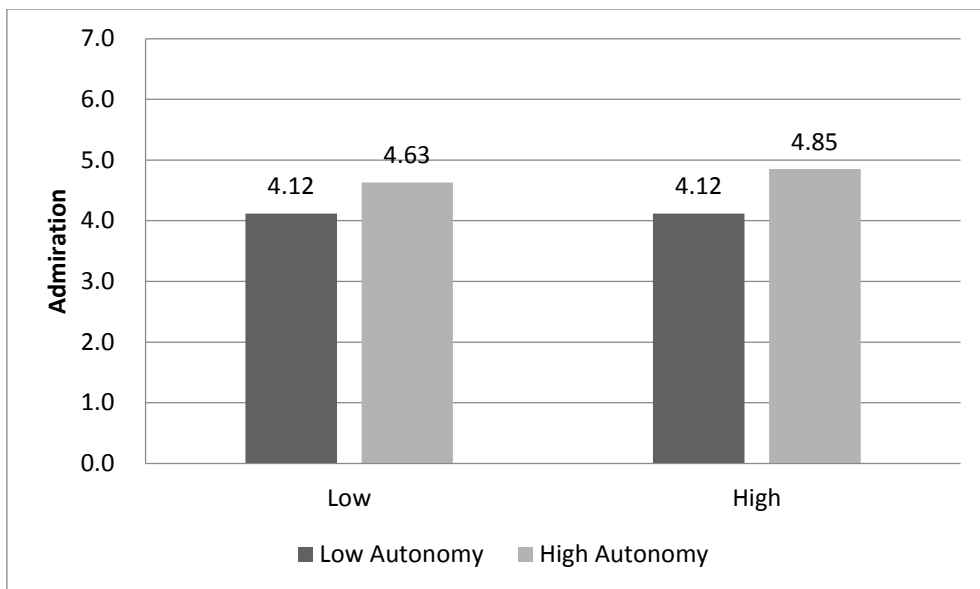
Risk-taking Attitude. As mentioned, to form a composite measure of participants' risk-taking attitude construct, I first averaged the 18 items used to test participants' risk-taking attitude. Then, an ANOVA was performed to test whether there is a

significant difference participants' risk-taking attitude in two autonomy conditions. The result confirmed that risk-taking attitude did not vary with conditions ($M_{\text{high}}=4.41$, $M_{\text{low}}=4.52$; $F(1,158)=0.622$; $p>0.43$). Then, for further analysis, all participants divided into high or low risk-taking attitude conditions according to whether their scores are higher or lower than the mean. Consistent with H2, prior mediation test revealed that admiration for the focal brand would be greater when respondents viewed the high autonomy brand scenario than when they viewed the low autonomy brand scenario. As hypothesized in H3, I expected that the role of autonomy on admiration would vary with their risk-taking attitude. That is, to high autonomy brand, participants with high risk taking attitude have a greater chance to admire the brand, whereas to the low autonomy brand, participants' admiration would not vary with their risk taking attitude.

An 2 (autonomy: high versus low) $\times 2$ (risk-taking attitude: high versus low) ANOVA was performed to test these expectations. Admiration was the dependent variable, whereas autonomy and risk-taking attitude were the fixed factors. The result revealed a significant main effect of autonomy ($M_{\text{high}}=4.74$, $M_{\text{low}}=4.11$; $F(1,156)=9.85$; $p<.005$), which reconfirmed the positive affect of autonomy on admiration. As predicted, the main effect of risk-taking attitude was not significant ($M_{\text{high}}=4.36$, $M_{\text{low}}=4.50$; $F(1,156)=0.32$; $p>0.1$). However, the predicted autonomy \times risk-taking attitude interaction was not significant ($F(1,156)=0.34$, $p>0.1$). To further analyze, I split the data according to participants' risk-taking attitude level and conducted an ANOVA to explore the effect of autonomy on admire differently. The results revealed that participants with

high risk-taking attitude indeed showed a more significant main effect of autonomy on admiration ($M_{high}=4.85, M_{low}=4.12$; $F(1,77)=5.58$; $p=0.02$) than participants with low risk-taking attitude ($M_{high}=4.63, M_{low}=4.12$; $F(1,79)=4.24$; $p=0.04$). Therefore, though the results did not lend support for the significant interaction effect of autonomy and risk-taking attitude, participants with high risk-taking attitude indeed have a greater chance to admire high autonomy focal brand compare to participants with low risk-taking attitude (see fig. 6).

Figure 6: Influence of Autonomy on Admiration According to Risk-taking Attitude



Moderated mediation. To demonstrate moderated mediation, a bootstrapping analysis that generated a simple size of 500 was conducted using SPSS PROCESS MODEL 7 (Hayes, 2012; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The outcomes of moderated

mediation showed that at the 95% significant level, the CI for the indirect effect was not significant and included zero [$\beta=0.15$, 95% CI (-0.35, 0.69)]. Combining with the prior ANOVA results that there is no a significant two-way interaction between autonomy and individuals' risk-taking attitude, these findings suggested that a more powerful mediator might exist in case of interacting the autonomy of a brand and individuals' risk taking attitude. This will further discussed in the discussion section.

Perceived risk. To better explain the result, I measured participants' perceived risk to the autonomy of focal brand after measuring their risk-taking attitude. As mentioned, autonomy costs. In other word, autonomy signaling risk. To support this premise, an ANOVA was performed. The result revealed a significant main effect of autonomy on perceived risk ($M_{high}=4.83$, $M_{low}=3.68$; $F(1,158)=32.76$; $p<0.001$). Consist with this result, after regressing perceived risk on autonomy, autonomy turned out to be a significant predictor of perceived risk ($\beta=.56$; $t(158)=9.41$; $p<0.001$). All these results confirmed that participants indeed see risk in autonomy.

3.1.4 Summary

Experiment 1 tested the proposed model by manipulating the autonomy level to a focal brand. The results showed support for the hypothesis that autonomy can lead to perceived coolness (H1) and admiration is the underlying mechanism that mediate the autonomy-perceived coolness relationship (H2). However, though

autonomy indeed signaling risk, the prediction that individuals' risk-taking attitude moderate the effect of autonomy on admiration was not supported. The autonomy× risk-taking attitude was not significant. But participants with high risk-taking attitude indeed had a greater chance to admire autonomy comparing to low risk-taking attitude participants.

3.2 Study 2: Manipulating Autonomy of a Hypothetical Person

To generalize the findings of study 1, in study 2, participants were asked to evaluate their perceived coolness to a person, whose autonomy various from low to high. The construct of this study is still based on the prior research of Warren and Campbell (2014). Admiration appears to be ability to motivate and help humans learn adaptive behaviors(Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Immordino-Yang & Sylvan, 2010). In their research, Haidt and Seder (2009) emphasized that admiration is a particularly human “emotion that facilitates learning” . Specifically, when someone admires another person, there can be a desire to “be like” that other person, in terms of skill, work ethic, character, or other qualities(Sarapin, Christy, Lareau, Krakow, & Jensen, 2014). We also can say that people copy or emulate the behavior of those whom they admire. These findings on admiration are consist with the results of those researches on coolness. Prior research has found that cool people exert a larger social influence and are more likely to be imitated by other consumers (Belk et al., 2010; Warren & Campbell, 2014). So investigating the mediating role of admiration during autonomy-coolness relationship can help to

further understand why people pursue cool and emulate the behaviors of those cool people. What's more, addition to what makes a brand cool, in this study, what makes a person cool will be discussed. This is particularly important to those individuals who want to be cool and those who want to deals with cool value segmentation.

The framework of this study is similar to study 1. I manipulated the autonomy by asking the participants to read a description of a hypothetical target person, who shows rather high or low autonomy. All variables were measured in the same scales used in study 1.

3.2.1 Participants and Procedure

120 Chinese young customers' was recruited through Wechat. 67.5% of the participants were female and 93.3% of the participants were age from 20-35. The experiment was a 2 (autonomy: high versus low) \times 2 (risk-taking attitude: high versus low) between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two autonomy conditions in which they read description of a hypothetical person: Amber. I manipulated autonomy from low to high levels in the same way with Warren and Campbell (2014).

Participants in the low autonomy condition read:

“Amber understood that society expects people to display “typical” manners, engage (or not engage) in certain behaviors, and pursue particular types of goals.

Amber was well aware of society's code, and she always conformed to it. She rarely would assert her independence or do her own thing. For example, Amber never wore unusual hairstyles or dressed differently than others. Although there were times she disagreed with the government, her boss, or her parents, she didn't protest against these or other authorities. After she finished college, Amber moved to the city where she has become part of a larger community and regularly interacts with other people."

Participants in the high autonomy condition read:

"Amber understood that society expects people to display "typical" manners, engage (and not engage) in certain behaviors, and pursue particular types of goals. Amber was well aware of society's code, and she never conformed to it. She always would assert her independence and do her own thing. Amber often wore unusual hairstyles and dressed differently than others. There were times she disagreed with the government, her boss, or her parents and would engage in protests against these or other authorities. After she finished college, Amber moved into the wilderness where she now lives in isolation and avoids interaction with other people."

The wording of these instructions was the Chinese version of the scenario had been used in the article of Warren and Campbell (2014).

After reading the description to the brand accordingly, participants' perceived coolness to the person, their inferred autonomy were measured. Finally, I assessed participants' risk perception to autonomous of Amber and differ from study 1, their

individual risk-taking attitude in the domain of health/safe, recreational, and social, instead of finance, were measured.

3.2.2 Measure

All the measurements were the same as study 1 with two exception. Specifically, first, participants' perceived coolness was measured by asking participants how "cool" they and would their friend think Amber is. Second, participants' risk-taking attitudes were measured in the domain of "heath/safety," "recreational," "social". I replaced the domain of finance into health/safety since the scenario is more correlated with health/safety than finance. All variables were measured with the same scale used in study 1.

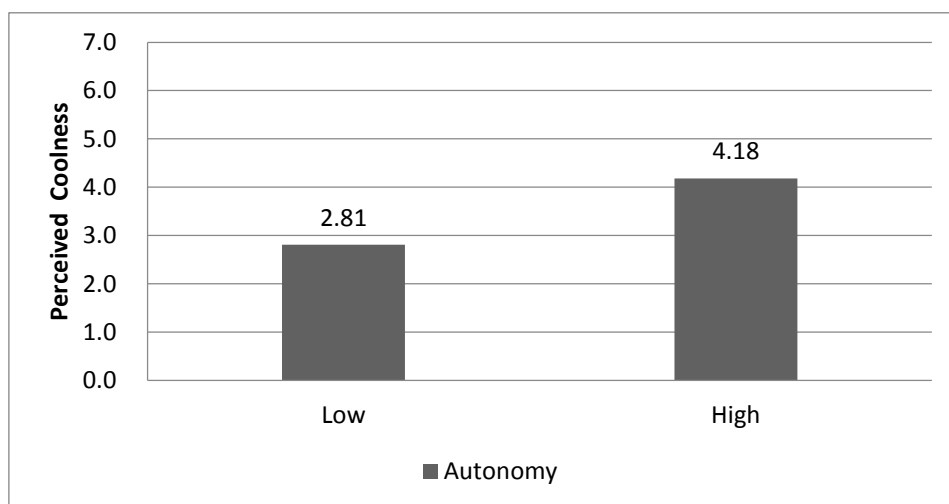
3.2.3 Result

Manipulation check. One-way ANOVA was conducted to check the manipulation of autonomy. As expected, participants in the high autonomy condition ($M_{high}=5.19$) showed greater autonomy than those who were in low autonomy condition ($M_{low}=3.19$; $F(1,118)=55.69$; $p < .001$). These results suggest that manipulation of autonomy was successful.

Perceived coolness. To explore the effect of autonomy on participants' perceived coolness, an ANOVA was performed with the perceived coolness as depend

variable and autonomy condition as fixed factor. ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of autonomy on perceived coolness($F(1,118)=22.65$, $p<0.001$). That is, consist with H1, participants in the high autonomy description condition showed a significantly higher perceived coolness ($M_{high}=4.18$) than participants in the low autonomy description condition ($M_{low}=2.81$). The result is presented in Fig 7.

Figure 7 : Influence of Autonomy on Perceived Coolness



Mediation analysis: Admiration. To test the mediation role of admiration in autonomy-perceived coolness relationship, I followed Baron and Kenny (1986)'s four-step approach to mediation. Accordingly, I first regressed participants' perceived coolness on autonomy. Consist with the ANOVA reported earlier, this analysis suggests that autonomy is a significant predictor of individuals' perceived coolness ($\beta=.59$; $t(118)=8.33$; $p<0.001$). Second, I regressed the admiration on

autonomy ($\beta=.48$; $t(118)=8.27$; $p<0.001$), which confirmed that higher autonomy lead to greater admiration to the person. Third, I regressed participants' perceived coolness on admiration ($\beta=.88$; $t(118)=11.22$; $p<0.001$), which revealed a positive and significant relationship between admiration and perceived coolness. Fourth and last, I regressed participants' perceived coolness on autonomy and admiration. Both of admiration and autonomy remained significant (admiration: $\beta=.68$; $t(117)=7.19$; $p<0.001$; autonomy: $\beta=.26$; $t(117)=3.57$; $p<0.005$) and the beta weight for autonomy decreased from 0.59 to 0.26. The results showed that admiration partially mediated the effect of autonomy on perceived coolness (see fig. 8). Therefore, H2 was supported.

A bootstrapping analysis that generated a sample size of 5000 was then conducted using SPSS PROCESS MODEL 4 (Hayes, 2012; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The results showed that 95% confidence interval (CI) for the direct effect was significant and excluded zero [$\beta=0.88$, 95% CI (0.47, 1.30)] and the CI for the indirect effect also excluded zero [$\beta=0.48$, 95% CI (0.096, 0.825)], which proved that the admiration could function as a mediator to the effect of autonomy on perceived coolness at the 95% significance level (see fig. 9).

Figure 8: Mediation Analysis Based on Baron and Kenny (1986)'s Method

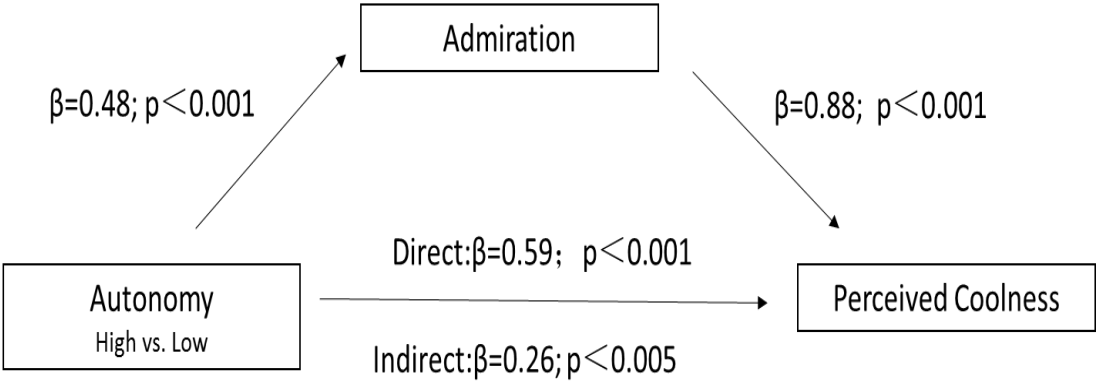
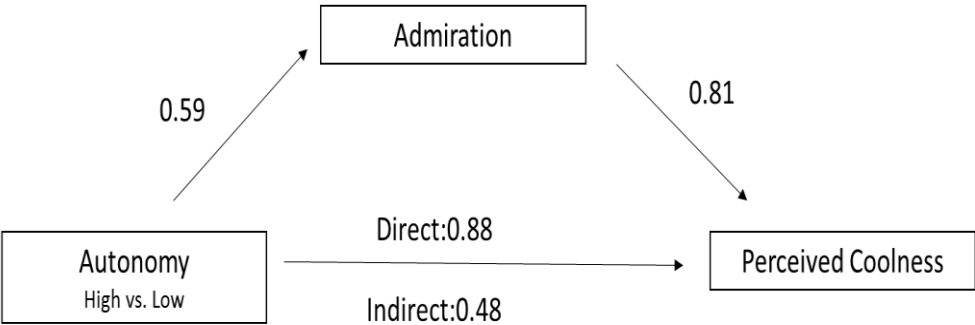


Figure 9: Mediation Analysis Based on Hayes (2012)'s Method



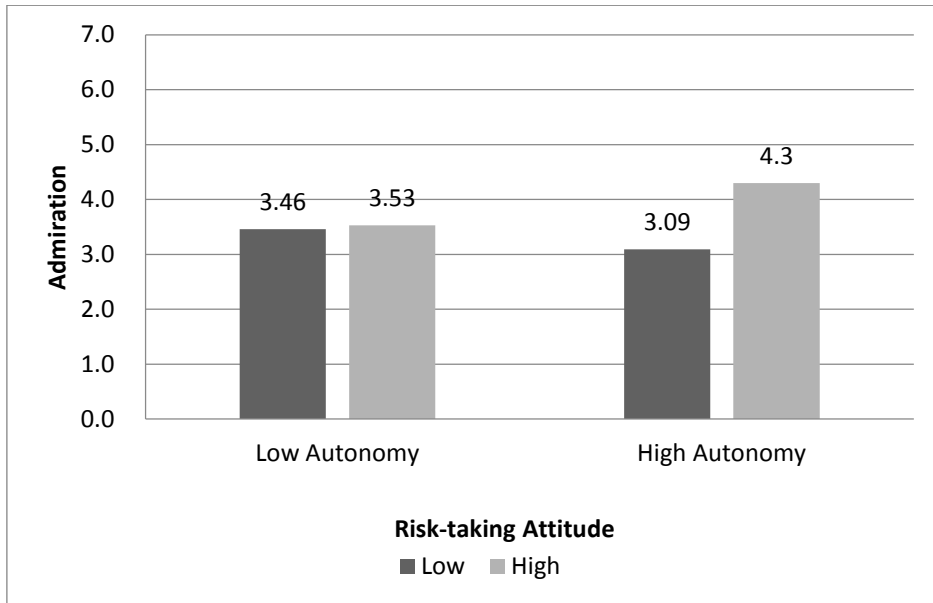
Note. for all pathways $p<0.05$

Risk-taking Attitude. Consist with experiment 1, an ANOVA was first performed to test whether there is a significant difference participants' risk-taking attitude in two autonomy conditions. The result confirmed that risk-taking attitude did not vary with conditions ($M_{high}=4.38$, $M_{low}=4.35$; $F(1,118)=0.026$; $p>0.8$). Then, for further analysis, all participants divided into high or low risk-taking attitude conditions according to whether their scores are higher or lower than the mean. As

hypothesized in H3, I expected that the role of autonomy on admiration would vary with individuals' risk-taking attitude. That is, participants with high risk taking attitude have a greater chance to admire autonomy than participants with low risk taking attitude in the high autonomy condition, whereas in the low autonomy condition, the admiration would not vary with individuals' risk-taking attitude.

An 2 (autonomy: high versus low) \times 2(risk-taking attitude: high versus low) ANOVA was performed to test these expectations. Admiration was the dependent variable, whereas autonomy and risk-taking attitude were the fixed factors. The result revealed a significant main effect of autonomy ($M_{high}=3.88$, $M_{low}=3.28$; $F(1,116)=12.13$; $p < .05$) and the main effect of risk-taking attitude was not significant ($M_{high}=3.67$, $M_{low}=3.50$; $F(1,116)=0.62$; $p > 0.1$). Consistent with the expectation, the predicted autonomy \times risk-taking attitude interaction was significant ($F(1,116)=5.32$, $p < 0.05$). That is, participants in high autonomy condition reported a greater admiration to the subject when they had a high risk-taking attitude than they had a low risk-taking attitude ($M_{high} = 4.30$ vs. $M_{low} = 3.53$, respectively; $F(1, 58)=4.59$, $p < 0.05$). However, the difference of admiration between individuals with high and low risk-taking attitude was not significant ($M_{high} = 3.09$ vs. $M_{low} = 3.46$, respectively; $F(1, 58)=1.21$, $p > 0.1$). Therefore, H3 was supported and risk-taking attitude indeed moderated the effect of autonomy on admiration (see fig. 8).

Figure 10: Autonomy× Risk-taking Attitude Interaction



Moderated mediation. To demonstrate moderated mediation, a bootstrapping analysis that generated a sample size of 500 was conducted using SPSS PROCESS MODEL 7 (Hayes, 2012; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The outcomes of moderated mediation showed that at the 95% significant level, the CI for the indirect effect was significant and excluded zero [$\beta=0.92$, 95% CI (0.14, 1.70)]. Specifically, there was no significant difference in a low risk-taking attitude group [$\beta=0.06$, 95% CI (-0.47, 0.58)], but significant difference were found in a high risk-taking attitude group [$\beta=0.98$, 95% CI (0.43, 1.52)]. These results support the hypotheses that participants' risk-taking attitude positively moderates the relationship between autonomy and admiration. When participants have high risk-taking attitude, admiration to the subject can be acted as an underlying mechanism between the autonomy and perceived coolness, but not for the individuals with low risk-taking attitude.

Perceived risk. Consist with experiment 1, I measured participants' perceived risk to the autonomy of Amber after measuring their risk-taking attitude. An ANOVA was performed to test whether autonomy signaling perceived risk. The result revealed a significant main effect of autonomy on perceived risk ($M_{high}=4.28$, $M_{low}=3.05$; $F(1,118)=28.49$; $p<0.001$). Consist with this result, after regressing perceived risk on autonomy, autonomy turned out to be a significant predictor of perceived risk ($\beta=.24$; $t(118)=3.41$; $p<0.005$). All these results confirmed that participants indeed see risk in autonomy again.

3.2.4 Summary

Experiment 2 tested the proposed model by manipulating the autonomy level to a person. The results showed support for all the hypotheses. First, the result supports the proposition that autonomy leads to perceived coolness (H1) by showing the main effect of autonomy on perceived coolness. Second, the result replicated the result of experiment 1 that admiration is the partially mediator in autonomy-perceived coolness relationship. Therefore H2 was supported. Third and last, consist with H3, participants in high autonomy condition reported a greater admiration to the subject when they had a high risk-taking attitude than they had a low risk-taking attitude, whereas the difference of admiration between individuals with high and low risk-taking attitude was not significant. The moderating role of risk-taking attitude on the pathway of autonomy to admiration is supported. Additionally, the premise of the H3 that autonomy signaling risk is supported again

in this experiment.

4. General Discussion

4.1 Summary

Though coolness is not a new concept for both academics and marketers, exactly what makes things cool is remain under-investigated. To the writer's knowledge, Warren and Campbell (2014) first answered this question with empirical evidence. They proposed autonomy, in addition to being desirable, makes things cool (Warren & Campbell, 2014). They take the first step to reveal the uncovered but crucial question about coolness. This study, which replicated the work of Warren and Campbell (2014) on Chinese young consumer, not only tested the robust of the autonomy-perceived coolness relationship in a different culture but also proposed and revealed the underlying mechanisms of this effect.

Two experiments, were conducted to test the influence of autonomy on perceived coolness among Chinese young customers and to explore the mediating role of admiration between autonomy-perceived coolness relationship and moderating role of individual's risk taking attitude among the pathway from autonomy to admiration. In experiment 1, autonomy of a fictitious brand was manipulated. The results showed that autonomy can lead to perceived coolness and admiration is the underlying mechanism of this effect. However, though the results showed that individuals with high risk-taking attitude indeed have a greater chance to admire

autonomy comparing to individuals with low risk-taking attitude. The expected interaction of autonomy and risk-taking attitude was not observed. This result occurred may be because individual's personally risk-taking attitude may less related to their evaluation on autonomy of a brand, and as a result, their feeling of admiration to the focal brand derived from autonomy was less affected by their individual risk-taking attitude. Further work is needed to further explore the moderating role of risk-taking attitude.

Experiment 2, which manipulated autonomy of a hypothetical person, replicated the main effect of autonomy on perceived coolness and mediating effect of admiration in autonomy-perceived coolness relation chain. Notably, risk-taking attitude was proved, as predicted, indeed moderate the effect of autonomy on admiration. That is, participants will show more admiration to high autonomy object when they have a high risk-taking attitude than with a low risk-taking attitude and there would be no difference between high and low risk-taking individual's admiration to the object with low autonomy. It is worth mentioning that in both study, participants' perceived risk to the autonomy of the object was measured and as expected, autonomy indeed signaling risk. This is also can explain why individual's risk-taking attitude can moderate the effect of autonomy on admiration. People with high risk taking attitude have a greater chance to admire the object engaged in a risky behavior.

4.2 Theoretical Contribution and Implication

As mentioned, this research is conducted in the purpose of replicating the work of Warren and Campbell (2014) on what makes things cool on young Chinese consumer to generalize their findings that autonomy makes things cool and purposing the underling mechanisms to the effect of autonomy on customers' perceived coolness to enhance the understanding of both coolness and autonomy-coolness relationship. Therefore, the main contribution of this study lies in generalizing and developing the findings of Warren and Campbell (2014). Considering cultural differences, Warren and Campbell (2014) was doubt about the robustness of their work in collectivistic cultures and pointed out the necessity of addressing whether cultural differences will merely alter their findings in the future research. This paper, with two experiments, proved that autonomy indeed a robust predictor of coolness. This is notable because with the globalization of market economy, both product design and production processes need to meet the expectations of global customers. In this point of view, marketers can count on from autonomy to make their product or service to become cool. Prior study of Fitzsimons, Chartrand, and Fitzsimons (2008) found that brand exposure elicited automatic behavioral effects as did exposure to social primes. That is, Apple can makes customers "Think Different". Therefore, market practitioners can build a cool brand by expressing autonomy through appealing autonomy in their communication.

Proposing the underlying mechanism of autonomy-coolness relationship is another contribution of the current research. Admiration is found that mediating the process.

And this can help to better understand cool and cool seeking behaviors. Admiration is often discussed in terms of its ability to motivate and help humans learn adaptive behavior (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Immordino-Yang & Sylvan, 2010; Sarapin et al., 2014). To change the customers' behavior by appealing coolness is the reason of marketers frenzy on cool. Why people seek cool? With the findings of current research, instead of saying that people seeking coolness, we can say that people trying to be close to those who are admired. In marker place, especially in high-tech industry, where is the place particularly valuing coolness, the role of leader or the value of leader becomes an increasingly important part of branding. An admirable leader can let the observer perceive the leader to be cool and as a result to think the brand he is presenting is cooler. The more admired by the audience, the greater cool perception will be get by the audience. Prior study had found that coolness can mean different things to different people (Kerner & Pressman, 2007). Based on the moderating role of risk-taking attitude in current study, perception of coolness vary with individuals because they are diverse in their risk perception of autonomy and their risk-taking attitude in various dominants. Though this current research demonstrated the robust effect of autonomy on coolness and generalized this relationship on eastern culture, marketers should remember than cultural difference can alter customers' risk-taking attitude to the same subject and as a result alter their perceived coolness. According to risk-taking literature, people from Eastern and Western cultures are basically different in their risk evaluation and risk-taking attitude (Hsee & Weber, 1999; Weber & Hsee, 1998). Cheung et al. (2013) compared risk perception and risk-taking attitude between Hong Kong and mainland China undergraduate students and found significant difference in their

risk-taking attitude in different domains. Since Hong Kong Chinese were subject to a strong Western influence exerted by the British before 1997, whereas mainland Chinese are greatly affected by the communist ideology(Cheung et al., 2013), we can infer that there would be cultural differences exist in Western and Eastern customers. So when applying autonomy to build coolness, marketers should pay particular attention on their target customers' risk-taking attitude. Therefore, such domain needs more attention to pay.

4.3 Limitation and Future Research

There are several limitations for our replication study. To begin with, in this study participated our study online and for no rewards, which may cause some observations affected by others external factors. Besides, the sampling method selected in the current research snow bowling non-probability sampling, which may not guarantee that the samples select could exactly represent the general condition of Chinese young consumers. However, these would not alter the main findings that attained in this current research.

Admiration was proved to be a partially mediator between autonomy and perceived coolness in both two experiments. So there may other potential mediator existed in this process. This can be discussed in the future to extend the finding of (Warren & Campbell, 2014) and current research. Risk-taking attitude was demonstrated as the moderator only in when manipulating the autonomy level of a person, When manipulating the autonomy of a brand, the moderating effect was not significant.

Whether the moderating effect of risk-taking attitude is only effective to a real person? The effectiveness of risk-taking attitude as a mediator need more check in the future research. In current research, only a sunglass brand was used to test the model. In future research, in the purpose of generalization, both product categories and service products can be used to test the effect of autonomy on perceived coolness.

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Abstract (Korean)

국문초록

지각된 자율성이 젊은 중국 소비자들의 쿨의식에

미치는 영향

쿨에 대한 소비자들의 요구가 많아진 상황에서 마케터들이 이 부분 소비자들의 요구를 만족시키기 위해 자사 브랜드 및 제품에 있어 쿨한 이미지를 얻기 위해 여러 마케팅 채널을 활용하며 노력하고 있다. 쿨에 대한 연구가 끊임없이 많은 관심을 받고 있지만 소비자에게 쿨의식에 있어서 무엇이 결정적인 영향을 미칠 수 있는지에 관한 연구가 아직 부족한 상황이다. Warren & Campbell(2014)가 서양 소비자 대상으로 한 실증연구에서 지각된 자율성이 소비자들의 쿨의식으로 이어질 것이라고 처음으로 밝혔다. 이 논문에서 서양 문화권 소비자와 여러 면에서 차이가 있는 동양 소비자들에게도 비슷한 관계가 존재할 것이지에 대한 연구의 필요성을 제시했다. 따라서 본 연구는 젊은 중국 소비자를 대상으로 Warren & Campbell(2014)의 역구를 재현을 하면서 연구가 되지 않았던 이 관계의 내부 메카니즘을 알아보고자 한다. 특히 흥미가 자율성이 소비자들의 쿨의식에 영향을 미치는 과정을 매개를 하며 자율성이 흥미에 준 영향을 개인의 리스크 테이킹 태도가 조절 할 것을 제시하고자 한다.

젊은 중국 소비자들을 대상으로 한 두 개의 실험이 진행이 되었으며 실험1에서 한 가상 브랜드의 자율성을 조절을 하였으며 실험2에서 가정된 제삼자의 자율성을 조절을 하였다. 연구의 주요 결과는 다음과 같다. 첫째, 자율성이 소비자들의 쿨의식에 긍정적인 영향을 미칠 것이다 (Study1,2). 둘째, 브랜드 및 제삼자의 자율성이 쿨의식에 미치는 영향은 흥미에 의해 매개된다(Study1, 2). 셋째, 지각된 자율성이 흥미에 미치는 영향을 참가자들의 리스크 테이킹 태도가 조절한다(Study2). 그러나, 리스크 테이킹 태도의 조절효과가 제삼자의 자율성을 조절한 실험2에서만 유일하였으나 브랜드 자율성을 조절한 실험1에서는 유일하지 않은 결과를 보이였다. 이 부분에 대하여 토론부분에서 가능한 설명을 다루었다.

이어 본 연구가 지니는 실무적 시사점과 한계, 그리고 향후에 대한 제언을 제시하고자 하였다.

주요어: 쿨의식, 자율성, 흥미, 리스크 테이킹 태도, 젊은 중국 소비자

학번: 2014-25139

Appendix

You are invited to participate in this online survey. This is a research project being conducted by AIZIZI-NUERBIY, a graduate student at Seoul National University. Your survey answers will be sent to a link at Sojump.com where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Sojump does not collect identifying information such as your name or email address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. To complete this survey, you may take approximately 8 minutes. I am very appreciate for your participation.

Study 1

Now you are going to read a short introduction to a sunglasses brand—Reo. Please read the introduction carefully and answer questions below honestly and truthfully.

Participants in the low autonomy condition read:

“Reo follows the market to design sunglasses that fit mainstream tastes. There is nothing atypical or controversial about Reo products. Reo is concerned with gaining the approval of mainstream consumers and tries hard to follow the norm so it will be liked and accepted.”

Participants in the high autonomy condition read:

“Reo is a rebellious and controversial brand. Their products are radically different than other brands. Reo shows contempt for rules and a complete disregard for marketplace opinion. Reo and its employees do what they want whether or not it pleases others.”

1. Is this brand cool?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not cool at all

Very cool

2. Is this brand hip?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not hip at all

Very hip

Brands are often seen as possessing human characteristics and personalities. Next, we are going to ask you a few questions about the personality of Reo. In which extent do you agree with the following statements about the personality of Reo? (You will not allowed to move next page if unchecked things are left. To all statements, “1” means you are strongly disagree with the statement and “7” means you are strongly agree with)

I think Reo lives how it wants to live whether or not it pleases others.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Reo doesn't do things just to fit in.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Reo pays little attention to established social norms or conventions.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Reo rarely caves into social pressure.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Reo doesn't change who it is to suit others.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Reo breaks rules when it feels like it.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

When thinking about the personality of Reo, in which extent do you felt:

Admiration

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Respect

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Reverence

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Awe

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Inspiration

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Questions from this to the end of page are about your personal characteristics or dispositions. So please answer questions below honestly and check only one each question. For each of the following statements, please indicate the likelihood that you would engage in the described activity or behavior if you were to find yourself in that situation. Provide a rating from Extremely Unlikely to Extremely Likely, using the following scale:

1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6.....7

Extremely Moderately Somewhat Not Sure Somewhat Moderately Extremely

Unlikely Unlikely Unlikely Likely Likely Likely

Admitting that your tastes are different from those of a friend.

Choosing a career that you truly enjoy over a more prestigious one.

Speaking your mind about an unpopular issue in a meeting at work.

Moving to a city far away from your extended family.

Starting a new career in your mid-thirties.

Disagreeing with an authority figure on a major issue.

Going camping in the wilderness.

Going down a ski run that is beyond your ability.

Going whitewater rafting at high water in the spring.

Taking a skydiving class.

Bungee jumping off a tall bridge.

Piloting a small plane.

Betting a day's income at the horse races.

Investing 10% of your annual income in a moderate growth mutual fund.

Betting a day's income at a high-stake poker game.

Investing 5% of your annual income in a very speculative stock.

Betting a day's income on the outcome of a sporting event.

Investing 10% of your annual income in a new business venture.

People often see some risk in situations that contain uncertainty about what the outcome or consequences will be and for which there is the possibility of negative consequences. However, riskiness is a very personal and intuitive notion, and we are interested in your gut level assessment of how risky the Reo is in the marketplace with its management concept as mentioned above. Provide a rating from Not at all Risky to Extremely Risky, using the following scale:

1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....7
Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Risky	Very	Extremely
Risky	Risky	Risky	Risky		Risky	Risky

Next, for research purpose, some of your personal information is needed. But none of your identifying information such as your name or email address will be collected. Your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

What is your age?

1. Under 20 years old
2. 20-24 years old
3. 25-29 years old
4. 30-34 years old
5. Over 35 years old

What is your gender?

1. Male
2. Female

Which industry do you work now?

1. Student
2. Service industry
3. Manufacturing industry

4. Finance and insurance industry

5. Medical industry

6. Other _____

What your Monthly income?

1. <2000 yuan

2. 2000-4000 yuan

3. 4000-6000 yuan

4. 6000-8000 yuan

5. >8000 yuan

Where do you live now?

1. Provincial Capital City

2. Generic City

3. Other

The End!

Thank your again for your participation

Study 2

Now you are going to read a short description about a young people —Xiao Li. Please read the introduction carefully and answer questions below honestly and truthfully.

Participants in the low autonomy condition read:

“Amber understood that society expects people to display “typical” manners, engage (and not engage) in certain behaviors, and pursue particular types of goals. Amber was well aware of society’s code, and she always conformed to it. She rarely would assert her independence or do her own thing. For example, Amber never wore unusual hairstyles or dressed differently than others. Although there were times she disagreed with the government, her boss, or her parents, she didn’t protest against these or other authorities. After she finished college, Amber moved to the city where she has become part of a larger community and regularly interacts with other people.”

Participants in the high autonomy condition read:

“Amber understood that society expects people to display “typical” manners, engage (and not engage) in certain behaviors, and pursue particular types of goals. Amber was well aware of society’s code, and she never conformed to it. She always would assert her independence and do her own thing. Amber often wore unusual hairstyles and dressed differently than others. There were times she disagreed with the government, her boss, or her parents and would engage in protests against these or other authorities. After she finished college, Amber moved into the wilderness where she now lives in isolation and avoids interaction with other people.”

1. How cool or uncool do you think Amber is?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not cool at all

Very cool

2. How cool or uncool would your friend think Amber is?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not hip at all

Very cool

In which extent do you agree with the following statements about the Amber?

(You will not allowed to move next page if unchecked things are left. To all statements, “1” means you are strongly disagree with the statement and “7” means you are strongly agree with)

I think Amber lives how she wants to live whether or not it pleases others.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Amber doesn't do things just to fit in.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Amber pays little attention to established social norms or conventions.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Amber rarely caves into social pressure.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Amber doesn't change who she is to suit others.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

I think Amber breaks rules when she feels like it.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

When thinking about the Amber, in which extent do you felt:

Admiration

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Respect

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Reverence

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Awe

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Inspiration

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Not at all

Very Much

Questions from this to the end of page are about your personal characteristics or dispositions. So please answer questions below honestly and check only one each question. For each of the following statements, please indicate the likelihood that you would engage in the described activity or behavior if you were to find yourself in that situation. Provide a rating from Extremely Unlikely to Extremely Likely, using the following scale:

1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6.....7

Extremely Moderately Somewhat Not Sure Somewhat Moderately Extremely

Unlikely Unlikely Unlikely Likely Likely Likely

Admitting that your tastes are different from those of a friend.

Choosing a career that you truly enjoy over a more prestigious one.

Speaking your mind about an unpopular issue in a meeting at work.

Moving to a city far away from your extended family.

Starting a new career in your mid-thirties.

Disagreeing with an authority figure on a major issue.

Going camping in the wilderness.

Going down a ski run that is beyond your ability.

Going whitewater rafting at high water in the spring.

Taking a skydiving class.

Bungee jumping off a tall bridge.

Piloting a small plane.

Drinking heavily at a social function.

Engaging in unprotected sex.

Driving a car without wearing a seat belt.

Riding a motorcycle without a helmet

Sunbathing without sunscreen.

Walking home alone at night in an unsafe area of town.

People often see some risk in situations that contain uncertainty about what the outcome or consequences will be and for which there is the possibility of negative consequences. However, riskiness is a very personal and intuitive notion, and we are interested in your gut level assessment of how risky the Amber maybe in her daily life with her lifestyle as mentioned above. Provide a rating from Not at all Risky to Extremely Risky, using the following scale:

1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....7
Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Risky	Very	Extremely
Risky	Risky	Risky	Risky		Risky	Risky

Next, for research purpose, some of your personal information is needed. But none of your identifying information such as your name or email address will be collected. Your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

What is your age?

1. Under 20 years old

2. 20-24 years old

3. 25-29 years old

4. 30-34 years old

5. Over 35 years old

What is your gender?

1. Male

2. Female

Which industry do you work now?

1. Student

2. Service industry

3. Manufacturing industry

4. Finance and insurance industry

5. Medical industry

. Other _____

What your Monthly income?

1. <2000 yuan

2. 2000-4000 yuan

3. 4000-6000 yuan

4. 6000-8000 yuan

5. >8000 yuan

Where do you live now?

1. Provincial Capital City

2. Generic City

3. Other

The End!

Thank your again for your participation.